

## **Denton County Historical Commission**

110 West Hickory Street  
Courthouse-on-the Square  
Denton, Texas 76201

### **For Immediate Release**

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DCHC Marker Chair

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### **BELZ ROAD BRIDGE HISTORIC MARKER DEDICATION SET FOR NOVEMBER 13 IN GREENWAY PARK IN THE COLONY**

*The Belz Road Bridge crossed Duck Creek in northwestern Denton County on land that had been purchased by Josh B. Nance in 1898. Probably built in the early 1900s, the Belz Road Bridge connected the two largest communities in northwest Denton County – Bolivar and Sanger. It was used by farmers traveling to market, for transporting wheat to flour mills and the Santa Fe Railroad in Sanger, for mail routes and later bus routes. Today the refurbished and repurposed bridge sits in Greenway Park in The Colony.*

**The Colony, TX** – The adopted Belz Road Bridge that originally spanned Duck Creek and relocated to Greenway Park in 2008 will be recognized as a Denton County historic landmark at its new location in Greenway Park in The Colony. The dedication ceremony to unveil the Denton County Historical Commission (DCHC) marker will be held November 13 at 10 a.m. The event is sponsored by The Colony City Council and Community Development Corporation, The Colony Library Local History Committee and Denton County Historical Commission. Greenway Park is located at 5001 South Colony Boulevard, The Colony, 75056. Parking will be available at Perryman Park, 4930 South Colony Boulevard. The event is free and open to the public. Please RSVP to [kathy@tcpard.com](mailto:kathy@tcpard.com) or (972) 624-3957 by 5:00 p.m. on November 11.

Speakers for the event include Denton County Judge Mary Horn; Denton County Precinct 2 Commissioner Ron Marchant; Pam Nelson, The Colony Community Services Director; and DJ Taylor, editor of the DCHC newsletter, *Retrospect*. Students from Camey Elementary School will open the dedication with pledges to the U.S. and Texas flags.

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Texas State Representative Pat Fallon, District 106, will present a Texas House Resolution, and DCHC Marker Chairwoman Beth Stribling will recognize The Colony City Council, the Colony Community Development Corporation, The Colony Local History Committee and Don Beckel with certificates of commendation for efforts that led to the placement of the historical marker. Don Beckel, member of DCHC and The Colony Local History Committee, researched and wrote the 23-page documented historical narrative of the bridge. The marker was sponsored by the City of The Colony, who worked with DCHC Marker Committee.

Belz Road Bridge is one of 17 historic bridges identified in Denton County's "Bridging Yesterday to Tomorrow" 2000 DCHC brochure. Bridge advocate and DCHC member Mildred Hawk had researched and produced the bridge brochure highlighting the role they played in the early transportation history of Denton County. The brochure depicts the bridges at their original sites, spanning several Denton County creeks. Beckel wrote in the Belz Road Bridge historical narrative "the opportunity for The Colony to adopt and relocate the bridge was because of the efforts of Denton County Judge Mary Horn and Denton County Commissioners. "Wishing to keep the history and the historic bridges within the county, they created and developed the historic bridge adoption program, advertising it with an 'Adopt a Bridge' brochure sent to towns, cities and schools throughout the county.

The Denton County Commissioners Court participated in a federal program that allowed counties and states to pay 10 percent of the cost and federal government to pay 80 percent of the cost to replace old bridges. According to Don Beckel, 12 of these bridges met the criteria and became available for adoption and relocation as they were closed by Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) as unsafe for vehicular use. Recent DCHC Marker committee records report that 13 bridges have been adopted and four of these, including Belz, have DCHC markers. Two of the seventeen bridges remain in original location on public and private property. Old Alton Bridge and Elm Fork Bridge have state historical markers.

Belz Road Bridge is a steel, four-panel Warren pony truss. It contains three spans and is 87 feet long with a main span of 61 feet and a deck width of 11.6 feet. Belz Road and Belz Road Bridge were named after one of the earlier settlers in northwest Denton County. Albert and Bertha Belz and their children moved to the area in the early 1900s. They bought land that was

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part of the original Henry Tierwester and W. Mason land grants located west of I-35 and north of Sanger, near the historic community of Lois. They moved to the Lois area in 1910 and remained there until their deaths in the 1930s.

The bridge was closed in 2007 and moved in 2008 to the 1.88 acre urban park in the southeastern Denton County city of The Colony. Research records show the original land grant for this property was awarded to the Buffalo, Bayou, Brazos and Colorado Railroad Company (BBB&CRR) to sell and fund the building of a railroad. Beckel writes “it is worthy to note that the property once designated to help build a transportation system in the new state of Texas will continue its early transportation mission in being part of an alternative transportation project --a hike and bike trail in The Colony.”

For more information on the marker dedication or the DCHC and Texas Historical Commission Marker Program contact Beth Stribling at 940-241-2523, [bvstribling@gmail.com](mailto:bvstribling@gmail.com) or Roslyn Shelton, 940 349-2860, [Roslyn.shelton@dentoncounty.com](mailto:Roslyn.shelton@dentoncounty.com).

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